

REMARKS

As a preliminary matter, Applicant respectfully submits that 35 U.S.C. §121 does not require that a Restriction Requirement must first be made in order to file a divisional application. Accordingly, it is believed that the filing of the present application as a divisional application is proper.

Claim 20 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Claim 20 has been amended in a readily apparent manner to address the rejection. Accordingly, claim 20 is now believed to be allowable.

Claims 17-19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Carey et al. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection, because the cited reference does not disclose or suggest that the magnetization of the first magnetic layer and the second magnetic layer are maintained in either a first antiparallel state or a second anti-parallel state, without entering into a parallel state, as in the present invention.

The magnetic recording medium of Carey et al. discloses two magnetic layers which have one remanent state which is an antiparallel state and another remanent state (arrows 72, 74) which is also in an antiparallel state. The Carey et al. reference, however, does not disclose or suggest that the first magnetic layer and the second magnetic layer are maintained in either a first antiparallel state or a second antiparallel state, without entering into a parallel state. In fact, Carey et al. expressly teach that getting from one antiparallel remanent state to another antiparallel remanent state requires going “through an intermediate state where the moments of the two films are parallel (arrows 62, 64)” (emphasis added). For these reasons, claim 17 and its dependent claims 18-20 are allowable over Carey et al.

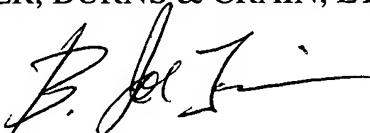
New claims 22 and 23 depend directly or indirectly from claim 17, and are also allowable over Carey et al.

For all of the above reasons, Applicants request reconsideration and allowance of the claimed invention. The Examiner should contact Applicants' undersigned attorney if a telephone conference would expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

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